



PRESS RELEASE
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For Immediate Release

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**APPEALS COURT AFFIRMS CONVICTIONS OF FORMER CITY OFFICIALS STEVE
LABRAKE AND PAULETTE LYNNE LABRAKE AND FORMER HOUSING
ORGANIZATION CHIEF CHET LUNEY**

Tampa, Florida - A federal appeals court in Atlanta has affirmed the convictions and sentences of STEVE ALLEN LABRAKE, his wife PAULETTE LYNNE LABRAKE, and CHESTER ("CHET") MAURICE LUNEY that arose out of their involvement in a Tampa bribery and fraud conspiracy. STEVE LABRAKE had been head of the City of Tampa's Community Redevelopment Agency, and LYNNE LABRAKE had been a senior redevelopment counselor for that agency. LUNEY had served as CEO of the Tampa Hillsborough Action Plan, which contracted with the City of Tampa on low-income housing projects.

The United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit agreed that the evidence at trial had been sufficient to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that these three defendants were guilty of bribery, wire fraud, conspiracy, and other, related counts. The panel of three judges also rejected the defendants' other arguments, which challenged the indictment, the district court's conduct of the trial, and STEVE LABRAKE's sentence.

STEVE LABRAKE and LYNNE LABRAKE are serving sentences of 60 months' and 41 months' imprisonment, respectively, and CHET LUNEY is serving a sentence of 33 months' imprisonment.

Assistant United States Attorney David Rhodes handled this appeal for the United States. The case had been investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Inspector General, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Inspector General.